

In the Specification

Please amend the previously amended first full paragraph on page 3 of Amendment A dated July 27, 2004 as follows:

Figure 7 shows a schematic representation of evacuation system 98 for safely venting steam and other gases ~~pass from~~ sterilization chamber 10 through a HEPA filter as a part of normal venting operations, and also in the event of a failure of the electric power or an overpressure in the chamber. It is intended that evacuation system 98 replace escape valve 54 shown in Figs. 1 and 2 hereof and evacuation valve 56 and pump 58, also shown therein. In operation, pressure transducer 99 may be set to detect sterilization chamber pressures in excess of, say, 65 psi at which point an electrical signal generated by pressure transducer 99, which may be amplified using electronics, not shown in the figures, directs valves, 114 and 116, which are otherwise maintained in a closed position during operation of sterilization chamber 10, to their normally open positions. Valves 114 and 116 can also be opened during an electric power failure, or during normal sterilizer chamber venting operations. Gases and vapors escaping from sterilization chamber 10 are directed through HEPA filter, 122, thereby preventing discharge of residual pathogens into the environment. Additionally, during evacuation operations of the sterilizer described hereinabove, valves 114 and 116 are kept closed, valve, 118, is kept closed, and valve, 120, is opened to permit pump 58 to exhaust chamber 10 through HEPA filter 122. In the event that it is desirable to directly exhaust chamber 10 using pump 58, valves 114 and 116 are closed, and valves 118 and 120 are opened.